

**Hayes, Katherine**

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**From:** Ryan Holmes [rholmes918@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 10:50 AM  
**To:** Friis, John  
**Cc:** eca\_pace@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** HB6666, Section 5

Hi There,

I am an ECA Theatre Dept. alum, class of 2001. My time at the ACES Educational Center for the Arts completely changed my life. The part time teachers at ECA have been more invaluable to me than any full time, certified teacher I have ever had. ECA is where I realized I wanted to become an actor. Largely due to the influence ECA had on my artistic abilities, I was accepted into one of the best drama departments in the country. I attending Syracuse University and majored in Acting. Since college, I have had a successful acting career in Los Angeles and New York City.

It was a play I did sophomore year at ECA called King Gordogan that made me realize I wanted to be an actor. The playwright, a 77-year-old Croatian man named Radovan Ivsic flew himself and his wife to Connecticut to come to our show. I had the absolute honor of directing this play at Syracuse. The playwright, then 83, once again flew back to see it. He knew of the high quality work we did at ECA and loved it so much that he returned when I, an ECA alum, did the show again. If it were not for ECA, I wouldn't have this incredible relationship with this amazing playwright.

At ECA, I learned so many things. I learned hip hop dance, West African drumming, how to play the harmonica, American Sign Language. The friends I made in the ECA Theatre Department are still some of my best friends today. The faculty at ECA is full of artists we need in New Haven to keep the artistic vibrancy of the city going. High school students in and around New Haven who have an interest in the arts need ECA. I would be lost without ECA. Please realize the importance of ECA teachers. It is truly the most special educational institution I have ever attended. This arts school challenged me on a level no other school has.

"It's Okay, We're ECA."

Sincerely,  
Ryan Holmes  
ECA Theatre Department  
Class of 2001

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